

43rd ASSEMBLY DISTRICT • ASSEMBLY DEMOCRATIC CAUCUS CHAIR

Contact: Rebekah Sweeney

(608) 266-3790

For Immediate Release: March 26, 2015

Jorgensen: Saving SeniorCare Means Leaving SeniorCare Alone Milton Dem Concerned Over Talk of Premium Increases, Enrollment Limits

MADISON – Assembly Democratic Caucus Chair and State Representative Andy Jorgensen (D-Milton) today called on Republican members of the budget-writing Joint Finance Committee to not only recognize the value of SeniorCare, but to preserve the program exactly as it is, without fee increases or limitations on enrollment. At a public hearing on the budget earlier today, JFC Co-Chairman John Nygren (R-Marinette) shared opposition to Governor Walker's plan to shift SeniorCare participants onto Medicare Part D, a more costly and complicated program.

"Thousands of people have signed the Democrats' Save SeniorCare petitions and many more have contacted their state lawmakers directly – and it's clear to me, they're being heard," said Jorgensen. "The needle is moving on SeniorCare, but we're going to have to keep the pressure on to ensure SeniorCare is truly saved."

While Nygren's official release on the Republican SeniorCare plan stated he would be "taking a stand for SeniorCare," his interviews later in the day revealed his openness to premium increases. Two weeks ago, Assembly Speaker Robin Vos (R-Rochester) also spoke of limiting access to SeniorCare benefits only to people currently enrolled in the program.

"If Republicans decide to charge participants more or cut off enrollment, they'll simply be sentencing SeniorCare to a slower death than what the Governor proposes," said Jorgensen. "I urge them to leave SeniorCare 'as is' – as the people of Wisconsin want it to be."

SeniorCare provides low-cost, life-saving prescription drugs to approximately 85,000 Wisconsin residents aged 65 or older. Unlike Part D, SeniorCare has a simple enrollment process, a \$30 annual enrollment fee, income-based deductibles and co-payments of just \$5 for generic medications. SeniorCare has no strict enrollment period or penalty and no gaps in coverage. Most participants save hundreds of dollars each year by utilizing SeniorCare's prescription drug benefits instead of Medicare Part D, and taxpayers save \$90 million per year through SeniorCare's direct negotiation with drug companies.

Jorgensen urges people to sign his online Save SeniorCare petition to express their support for the program 'as is.' The form can be found on his legislative website. Petitions will soon be delivered to Republican leaders.

###